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Adoption of the agenda and organization of work: reports of the General Committee

Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations: cooperation between the United Nations and the Inter-Parliamentary Union

Letter dated 7 November 2001 from the Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

I write with reference to agenda item 21 (f) on "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Inter-Parliamentary Union" (IPU) which, together with the other sub-items under agenda item 21, will be taken up directly in plenary on 6 December.

You will recall that this year, under agenda item 21 (f), the General Assembly has before it not only the report of the Secretary-General on the cooperative work undertaken over the last year by IPU and the United Nations (A/56/449), but also a report on a new relationship between IPU and the United Nations (A/55/996).

Specifically, the proposal is to give IPU observer status on a par with other international bodies that have similar status in the General Assembly. However, under decisions already taken by the Assembly, each such proposal for the grant of observer status must first be examined by the Sixth Committee.

In other years, this would have posed no procedural difficulties, as the agenda item on IPU could have been considered very early on in plenary, referred to the Sixth Committee and then brought back to the plenary for a decision. However, this year, since all the agenda items on cooperation have been grouped together and will only be considered on 6 December, this would mean that a referral at that stage by the plenary to the Sixth Committee could result in a delay of a year in the grant of observer status to IPU.

Accordingly, after wide consultations which we have undertaken, India being the country that currently holds the Presidency of IPU, we believe that there is general support for a procedural modality, under which the General Committee would recommend to the plenary that it refer agenda item 21 (f) immediately to the

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Sixth Committee to consider the question of the grant of observer status to IPU, with the request that the Committee's recommendation be sent to the General Assembly before 6 December, when it would come up in plenary.

This proposal was made by my delegation earlier today in the meeting of the General Committee. Unfortunately, because the notice was short and we could not give the Presidency enough advance notice, the General Committee was unable to take a decision on the proposal, though it has taken note of it.

The purpose of my writing is to explain the reason for the urgency of having this procedure followed and to convey to you that a very wide cross section of the membership supports and would welcome this being done. We hope, therefore, that it will be possible for the General Committee to act on these lines.

(*Signed*) Kamalesh **Sharma**